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ABSTRACT

In response to dwindling enrollments and increasing competition from other postsecondary institutes and private training schools, the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) has developed a marketing plan to take advantage of existing opportunities. SAIT's Marketing Department focuses on developing a strong and unique institutional image and is made up of a marketing manager, projects funding manager, creative supervisor, public affairs supervisor and assistant, and school/community liaison. In addition, a faculty member within each department is designated as marketing representative. These representatives act as liaisons with potential students, employers, and advisory committees; promote SAIT facilities, expertise, and courseware; and encourage donations of equipment, supplies, funds, and scholarships. The development of SAIT's marketing process involved the following steps: (1) the creation of a network of departmental marketing representatives to facilitate communication; (2) the identification of target groups; (3) the identification of activities to be included in the marketing efforts; and (4) the development of marketing strategies for each department. Since the marketing program began, the role of the department representatives has been expanded to include responsibilities for business/industry/government training, school relations, special events, continuing education, and public relations. Although some issues remain to be resolved, positive outcomes of the marketing process have included the expansion of the pool of potential donors, advisory committee members, employers of graduates, and other contacts in the community; broader, more credible exposure in the marketplace; and the generation of revenues. An outline of the responsibilities of marketing representatives and the marketing objectives of SAIT's Business Education Department are appended to the paper. (AJL)

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THE INSTRUCTOR AS COLLEGE MARKETING REPRESENTATIVE

Susan Haddon

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INSTRUCTOR AS COLLEGE MARKETING REPRESENTATIVE

Instructors make ideal marketers. The Southern Alberta Institute of Technology has capitalized on this fact over the past eighteen months and will continue to expand and refine the concept in the years to come.

With an in-depth understanding of the industry, excellent communication skills and proximity to the market, the instructor is well equipped both to analyze market needs and to design and deliver a top quality product.

Each department at SAIT now has a designated marketing representative. His/her function is to liaise with potential students, employers, and advisory committees; to promote SAIT facilities, expertise and courseware; and to encourage donations of equipment, supplies, funds and scholarships. This individual will often take responsibility for his/her department's Continuing Education offerings and for Customized Industry Training as well. This necessitates partial to full off-loading for the instructor depending on the size and level of activity of the department. This is a major responsibility. And it takes support. Financial support. Research support. Media production support. Instructional material support. And more. This framework is now in place at SAIT and the results are showing. Results such as expansion into new markets - at the local, provincial, federal and international levels. Results which support the bottom line - SAIT will earn $4,900,000. in 1987 - 1988 from non-traditional sources directly attributable to the marketing effort. And results of a more qualitative nature - the increased level of satisfaction of our people, our community and our customer - **the student.**

In this session, I will discuss SAIT's rationale behind this innovative concept, the structure within the organization which supports it, the process and the outcomes.

RATIONALE

First lets talk about the rationale for our market-orientation.

SAIT underwent a strategic renewal several years ago. The process involved a situational analysis, an analysis of SAIT's strengths and weaknesses, development of a mission statement and finally the setting of goals and objectives. The process began with the Board of Governors and proceeded through senior administration to department heads and finally to faculty and support staff. It continues as an annual planning process in roughly the same format.

The environmental analysis done by the Board in 1986, outlined two potential threats.

Firstly, we were faced with an increasingly competitive environment. The competition was coming not only from other post-secondary institutes, but also from the training schools being created by the private sector and from industry which was developing its own brand of training.

Secondly, we were experiencing dwindling enrollments from our traditional markets.

At the same time, however, certain trends looked like tremendous opportunities for us if we could respond appropriately.

Firstly, the economic environment with its high level of unemployment, saw many unemployed taking this opportunity to acquire new or additional skills at the post-secondary level.

Secondly, the life-long learning trend was here to stay, largely as a result of the pace of technological change. As skills became obsolete, markets were created of individuals who needed upgrading or retraining. Whole new industries were spawned - bio-technology is one example. And the

continuing education of our population for personal as well as professional reasons, continues to grow.

Lastly, in a more global sense, Canada was developing and experiencing success with a new export commodity - knowledge.

Peter Drucker echoes these thoughts in his book, Innovation and Entrepreuneurship.

> **"Public-service institutions....need to be entrepreneurial and innovative fully as much as any business does. Indeed, they may need it more. The rapid changes in today's society, technology, and economy are simultaneously an even greater threat to them and an even greater opportunity."**
>
> **"...the continuing education and professional development of already highly educated and highly achieving adults has become the true 'growth industry' in the United States in the last twenty years."**
>
> Peter Drucker

SAIT had some solid strengths which meshed well with these opportunities and minimized the threats. These were:

1. A solid reputation for excellence in skills-based education.
2. A dedicated, flexible faculty and staff.
3. Extensive course and program offerings in a wide variety of technologies.

A mission statement was written to reflect this. The Board of Governors' objective then, was to position SAIT to achieve its mission. Next, an organizational structure had to be put in place to allow us to meet this objective.

> **SAIT shall be an innovative organization equipping people to compete successfully in a changing world of work by providing relevant, skill-oriented education.**

STRUCTURE

SAIT's marketing group is formed by two bodies - the Marketing Department and the marketing representatives delegated by each department. The Marketing Department's responsibilities include marketing of SAIT to its many constituent groups through the development of a strong, unique institutional image, and supporting the marketing efforts of department representatives.

The Marketing Department includes the following:

Marketing Manager

The Marketing Manager reports to an Associate Vice President who also looks after the effective functioning of our advisory committees, and our apprenticeship area. He is responsible for the achievement of SAIT's marketing goals and objectives and he coordinates the activities of individual departments. A secretary and an assistant provide support and also help with our new electronic messaging system.

Projects Funding Manager

With the assistance of a secretary, the Projects Funding Manager is responsible for contact with our donors, capital and equipment donations, fundraising, endowments and scholarships.

Creative Supervisor

The Creative Supervisor is responsible for all promotional literature needed by SAIT for individual department requirements so that consistency is assured and recognition is increased. He has a staff of artists and writers to assist him.

Public Affairs Supervisor and Assistant

These two individuals are responsible for all media relations, all advertising, and a monthly publication. (INSAIT) They share a secretary with:

School and Community Liaison

The School and Community Liaison handles any contact with local and regional junior and senior high schools, the community, and was responsible for the creation of an on-going partnership with a nearby elementary school.

The renewal process had suggested a six-part framework for objective setting. One category of objectives was, of course, marketing. Most departments, when faced with the prospect of setting marketing objectives, decided they would need someone to take on the task - hence the "Marketing Representative."

The rationale for using instructors to fill these positions was sound - who would understand student needs, know the industry, be current in the technology and be conversant with the institute's many services better than the instructor?

So now we had a commitment to marketing throughout all levels of the institute. As Dennis Johnson suggests in an excellent article entitled "The Fifth P in the Marketing Mix", this is a critical determinant to success.

"The President must be the catalyst for institutional change that reflects marketplace change".

"The most effective marketing-oriented colleges are the ones where everyone practices marketing. When marketing reaches every level, pushed down to every work group or department, a synergism and energy result. ....the president reinforces the service commitment."

Dennis L. Johnson

PROCESS

The process could now be developed to enable each SAIT department to address their marketing objectives. The first step called for the development of a network of marketing representatives to allow better communication to occur and to provide an opportunity to liaise with the Marketing Department. At one of the original meetings, which now occur weekly, it also became evident that training was needed, starting with the basics. What was marketing? How was it different in a non-profit organization? How might SAIT help its representatives market more effectively? To what degree were services such as creative media support, research, information systems and help with local contact networking necessary?
A job description was developed to cover key areas of responsibility. (See Appendix 1 attached). However, each representative's degree of off-loading from his or her instructional duties varies greatly.

Most representatives began their new role by developing a marketing strategy. An example from the Business Education Department is included as Appendix 2 (attached).

As you can imagine, making the strategy work was going to require tremendous dedication and enthusiasm and long hours. SAIT's Marketing Department had identified 13 target groups:

1. Advisory Committees
2. Alumni
3. Business and Community Leaders
4. Current SAIT Students
5. Donors
6. Employers
7. Government: Agency Counsellors and Advanced Education
8. Media
9. Other educational institutions
10. Parents of high school students.
11. Prospective Students
    - business and industry clients
    - continuing education
    - junior and senior high students
    - part-time students
    - transfer students
12. SAIT Community
    - AUPE
    - Board of Governors
    - SAFA
    - transfer students
13. Secondary school teachers, counsellors, administration.

and 10 different activities involved in the marketing process:

1. Department marketing initiatives
2. Advertising
3. SAIT publications
4. Internal communication
5. Special events and activities
6. Public Affairs
7. Enrollment Management
8. Research
9. Fund Raising
10. Institutional image

Depending on the nature of each department, some groups and some activities would take precedence. As Kotler suggests, each of these publics might require a separate marketing plan.

> "A college is not dealing with the whole public as an undifferentiated mass, but with specific groups: donors, students, faculty, alumni, mass media, government, employers and many others. The marketer asks about each of these groups: What do they need and want, and what can we offer in exchange to build a long-lasting and satisfying relationship? Each public may require a marketing plan."

Each representative was now ready to develop a system which worked for his or her particular area within the guidelines of the institute's umbrella approach. It has been a very exciting period of growth and learning for each of us and highly gratifying to have achieved the level of success we have.

OUTCOMES

Just how successful has the initiative been?

1. The first outcome was the widespread recognition of the importance of, and benefits to, the institute of just such a position. These original "marketing representatives" now perform a variety of additional functions as "key contact" people. Additional functions often include:

    a) Business and Industry Training - promoting our ability to design and deliver customized training to industry clients.

b) Government-assisted training programs - as CJS and Alberta training program funds became available, SAIT created a Federal and Provincial Training Department. Our marketing representatives develop proposals, arrange for the development of course material, work with faculty and provide other support as necessary to this group. The availability of training funds, particularly ATP where 50% of tuition costs are reimbursed to the client, has increased the attractiveness of training in most industry sectors.

c) School liaison - we work with school liaison to build contacts with prospective students, school counsellors, teachers and principals. This increases our visibility and accessibility 20 to 30 fold, but the real benefit is in the depth of knowledge each representative offers - on course content, on the particular industry, on employment prospects, on prerequisites for admission and on a wealth of other topics.

d) Special events coordinator - representatives plan for and participate in our annual Open House and attend numerous general and industry specific trade shows - a task which our central marketing group was only able to pay lip service to.

e) Continuing Education - many times during the course of our discussions, it became evident that a training need existed which could best be satisfied by a Continuing Education offering, whether for credit or general interest. Once again the marketing representative's extensive knowledge was invaluable and the increased number of contact people within our organization improved our credibility and accessibility.

f) International - sometimes programs developed for local clients are equally marketable abroad. We are presently working on a Saudi Arabian proposal which began as a customized program for a local client. Additionally, the creation of partnerships with SAIT as the training arm can help local or regional industries land contracts abroad.

g) Public Relations - relations with other key publics such as other departments within the institute (many of our proposals to industry clients twin expertise from several departments), support departments (how to encourage the flexibility and quick response time we need) and the media, have formed part of the role of our market representatives.

So, our Marketing representative is now a key contact person and the customer likes that. Through one individual, Mohawk Oil:

a) arranged for $41,000 worth of customized training in 8 cities throughout the west.
b) received help in screening student applicants for summer employment.
c) arranged to use SAIT facilities for the interviews.
d) was invited to sit on an Advisory Board and
e) is exploring a partnership opportunity to provide on-going work experience for our students and training for their employees.

2. The instructor representative becomes more knowledgeable about market needs and so provides a key link for the department and for the institute as a whole. Our program and course offerings may be altered to reflect these changing needs.

3. We are increasing our contact base for the generation of donations, membership on our advisory committees, employment opportunities for our graduates, possible guest lecturers, etc.

4. We are achieving a broader, more credible exposure in the marketplace (30 representatives each of whom knows his or her industry extensively and understands the way it operates, its needs, and his or her technology at SAIT.

5. We are generating revenue to stretch public funding - allowing us to act on opportunities we otherwise wouldn't be able to afford. "In times of affluence, the resources are there but the desire to innovate is not. In times of scarcity, the desire is there but the resources are not". This revenue affords us the opportunity.

On the other hand, some issues have not yet been resolved:

1. The variance in the degree of off-loading each representative is given, combined with the number of additional responsibilities each representative undertakes have resulted in unclear role definitions.

2. Tradition prevails - in many areas across campus, the consensus is that we should spend less time "marketing" and get back to the business of teaching and to our traditional two-year programs. This is changing slowly.

3. Stress and burnout - despite the real exhilaration we each feel, stress and burnout may start to take their toll on individuals who are working long hours and to tight deadlines at the whim of the client.

4. Financial - the position is same pay as on the instructor grid yet, because of workload, uncertain schedules and long hours, the instructor representative usually cannot supplement his or her income with Continuing Education's hours or overload pay.

5. Marketing does not stop for 9 weeks during the summer, yet our instructors would like to.

SUMMARY

Yet, it's working!

1. Industry is seeking us out, is impressed with our caliber of training, our flexibility, our responsiveness.

2. International is taking off after years of dedicated effort - 4 recent contracts are worth $5 million plus, and increasing numbers of foreign students are coming from abroad to experience SAIT and benefit from our expertise.

3. Continuing Education is growing steadily as an adjunct to our day programming.

4. We have formed a partnership with a local elementary school - we expose a new generation to SAIT at a younger age, fulfill our role as a responsible member of the community and are now working towards a joint day-care facility.

5. Government training - the provision of programming for special categories of training needs has given us more insight and exposed us to a broader market to whom we are now responsive.

6. Financially we are becoming less reliant on public funds and traditional markets. Business and Industry brought in over half a million dollars from 268 programs in the first 10 months of this year, and International has signed contracts for $5 million plus. The analogy of Japanese car manufacturers who, when U.S. quotas were imposed and they had surplus production, sent their production line people out to market their wares, fits SAIT's innovative stance in creating the role of the marketing representative.

7. We provide a community service to constituent groups by allowing access to our classrooms and labs, and by working closely with the Calgary Economic Development Authority and other local and regional agencies.

8. Our image is stengthened as a proactive, responsive and flexible organization with the best in quality, skills-oriented education because of the dedication, expertise, and innovative efforts of our people.

by Susan Haddon
SOUTHERN ALBERTA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

APPENDIX 1

RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEPARTMENTAL MARKETING REPRESENTATIVES

1. Co-ordinate all departmental marketing initiatives and plans in consultation with SAIT's Marketing Department.

2. Work with SAIT's Marketing Department to develop departmental marketing action plans outlining:

    - department mission
    - marketing objectives
    - situation analysis
    - competitive analysis
    - program analysis
    - market research analysis
    - advertising/promotion analysis
    - target markets
    - strategies

3. Co-ordinate communication with marketing and departmental staff regarding departmental requirements and activities in:

    - public affairs
    - community/school liaison
    - projects funding
    - creative design
    - alumni relations
    - liaise with the Marketing Department re: off-campus contacts in the above areas, ie. departmental trade show requirements and participation

4. Co-ordinate program development through Continuing Education and Business/Industry departments ie: contacts, pricing, evaluation, methodology etc.

5. Work with Projects Funding to obtain cash and equipment donations.

6. Work with Marketing Department and Institutional Analysis and Planning to:

    - design and administer survey instruments to gather marketing planning and client support information.
    - evaluate results of departmental marketing initiative.
    - define potential target markets.
    - develop a student recruitment and placement strategy.

7. Work with the Marketing Department to priorize marketing objectives and action plans to ensure that:

    - SAIT's resources are maximized.
    - Departmental marketing objectives reflect those of the Board of Governors.
    - SAIT's corporate image and identity is enhanced.

BUSINESS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

1. MISSION

To be a leading business education resource which meets the learning needs of the community in a manner which encourages responsible innovation, flexibility and a commitment to excellence.

2. MARKETING OBJECTIVES

- We will develop and implement a comprehensive marketing strategy by May 1, 1987 to be updated annually by June 30, 1987.
- To maintain 1st year enrollments in our current programs and increase 2nd year enrollment 10% by September 1987 without lowering standards, to be reviewed annually by September 1, 1987.
- To increase enrollment in existing and new industry short courses and seminars by 100% by June 30, 1987.
- To identify and commit to one or more new co-operative ventures annually over each of the next 5 years.

3. SITUATION ANALYSIS

- Demand is strong for all Business Education programs: Business Administration, Secretarial Arts, Travel Counselling, Accelerated Accounting and Entrepreneurial Studies.
- Jobs are available for graduates from Business Education's programs which emphasize job entry, skill orientation.
- Applicants for business education programs dropped initially during 1985/86, but have strengthened during 1986/87; all programs are fully subscribed.
- Mature students are forming an increasingly higher percentage of applicants.
- Business education programs account for approximately 40% of SAIT's continuing education programming.

4. COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

- NAIT offers programs in direct competition with those of Business Education.

4. COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS (cont'd

- Grant MacEwan, Mount Royal College, NAIT, Lethbridge, and Medicine Hat, provide direct competition to SAIT's Business Education programs.
- Henderson, Career College provide direct competition to SAIT's 2 year programs with "compressed" length programs.
- Universities and private consultants provide competition for Business Education customized programs.

5. PROGRAM ANALYSIS

- Secretarial Arts and Accelerated Accounting are very strong programs.
- Business Administration Major will re-focus to better serve student needs.
- The first Entrepreneurial studies program has met with very strong and very positive response.

6. MARKET RESEARCH ANALYSIS

- Research is required to determine demand and job potential for a legal assistants program.
- Research is required to determine potential for business co-op education program.

7. ADVERTISING/PROMOTION ANALYSIS

- Continue with presentation to high schools and career fairs.
- Do specific market promos for Entrepreneurial,Accelerated Accounting, Business and Industry.
- Current copy for SAIT viewbook, calendar, program profiles.

8. TARGET MARKETS

- High school students for Secretarial Arts.
- Mature students for planned subject based Business Education curriculum.
- Continued promotion of continuing education programs.
- Business and Industry programming with various target groups eg. City of Calgary, LTV Energy, Mohawk Oil, Northern Telecom, Coopers Lybrand.

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9. STRATEGIES

- Proceed with Accelerated Accounting programming for large corporations like Dome.
- Expand entrepreneurial studies program.
- Screening applicants for travel counselling programs will ensure highest quality student intake.
- Continue transfer guide, on a course by course basis with Athabasca University.
- Expand business and industry customized programming.
- Communicate to potential employers the very favorable advantage SAIT has over University of Calgary's Business Commerce program for "hands on" job entry skills.
- Examine potential for offering proposal writing skills to on and off campus groups.
- Host meetings on SAIT campus of professional marketing associations and groups.

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